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# THE RED CROSS

IN CHARGE OF

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*Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service*

TOWN AND COUNTRY NURSING SERVICE

BY FANNIE F. CLEMENT, R.N.

Demonstration of a new form of public health education has recently been inaugurated by the Southern Sociological Congress, which has sent out a group of experts on an extension campaign through the Southern States to stress health conservation. A weekly conference will be held in each community visited, conferences being conducted only in those communities from which an invitation from the joint religious bodies has been received by the congress. On the first round but one or two conferences will be conducted in each state, the first in Winston-Salem, N. C., September 19. It is expected that not only will the cause of public health be stimulated thereby, but that some permanent health organization will be effected as the result of the visit.

A Pullman car in which the speakers will travel and live, has been remodelled for use of the congress. On arrival the exhibit material hauled on the car is removed to a large hall or central point in the town. The staff of speakers and workers includes a director of public health surveys, of food surveys, of church social service, of medical examination, of school sanitation, of public health nursing and of exhibits.

The Red Cross has sent as its representative in charge of the public health nursing, Florence Besley, who has been granted leave of absence by her association in Fulton, Ky. Miss Besley's broad experience as a nurse and public health worker, and the fact that she is a Southern woman, familiar with the health needs of this section, make her well qualified to be of service in this pioneer task. Writing in regard to it, she says: "I feel as if I need the kindly support of our entire profession to make this our opportunity for greater service ideal. We nurses certainly are coming into our own."

Farmville, Va., Bristol, Tenn., Columbia and Greenville, S. C., Augusta and Valdosta, Ga., and Hattiesburg and Meridian, Miss., are included in the itinerary, and several towns in Alabama.

The impetus given to Red Cross war relief activities the past year

has extended even to many small communities and by way of a reflex, interest in visiting nursing among Red Cross organizations has been stimulated. In a number of communities where Red Cross visiting nurses are employed, new chapters or auxiliaries have been organized for the purpose of making surgical supplies. In these instances effort has been made to bring the two organizations into close association, since in accordance with Red Cross policy, generally, official relationship should be established between all Red Cross activities in one community.

It is probable that a chapter, in localities where a Red Cross visiting nurse is employed, even though not directly under its auspices, will aid the work, particularly in a material way, by lending financial assistance. A suggestion has come from a chapter in one of our large cities, too large to come within the scope of the Town and Country Nursing Service, that it support a Red Cross visiting nurse in some community that is unable to do so locally. Furthering constructive health work in their own country in this manner should appeal to many Red Cross workers who have given so generously towards relief abroad.

A special fund for supplementing the salaries of nurses in the Southern mountains has been started by the Red Cross, toward which \$1300 has been already contributed. This fund will be utilized in communities where there is a possibility that at the end of a certain period financial responsibility will be assumed locally. Immediate use will be found for contributions from chapters desiring to aid needy sections of their own state, or in other parts of the country.

Red Cross visiting nurses are now located in nineteen states. The first one to be appointed in Missouri started her work on August 1, at Hannibal, the early home of Mark Twain, where the Visiting Nurse Board of the Home Economics Club has affiliated with the Town and Country Nursing Service.

New work has been started in two near-by mill villages, Kannapolis and Concord, N. C., which towns have grown up around an industry. The largest towel manufactory in the world is located in this section. Washington County, a mountainous and very rural section of Virginia, has recently organized a citizens' health society and employed a visiting nurse, who will find her county schools readily accessible only by horseback. Hampton-Phoebus Visiting Nurse Association, also in Virginia, has affiliated.

Doylestown, Pa. has started a new community service under the Village Improvement Association. The Anti-Tuberculosis League of Fairmont, W. Va., a town near Clarksburg and Morgantown, where Red Cross visiting nurses have been employed for several years, has

associated its work with the Red Cross and expects to enlarge its sphere to include a general community nursing service.

Falmouth Township, Mass., has organized a township nursing association which began work this summer. Foxboro and Hatfield, two other Massachusetts communities, have recently affiliated their nursing work with the Red Cross. Another township to establish a new nursing work is that of Red Hook, Dutchess County, N. Y. Marin County (Calif.) Chapter of the Red Cross is doing county nursing. The first organization in Iowa to affiliate is in Muscatine, where a Public Health Bureau of the Welfare Association will have supervision of the nursing work.

Herkimer, N. Y., reports the opening of an infant welfare station. This is the first community among those employing Red Cross visiting nurses to take such a step. Few towns in the United States of 8000 or 9000, the size of Herkimer, have developed baby welfare work to this extent. Recently Palmerton, Pa., started two such centers.

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**West Virginia:** THE GRADUATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION OF WEST VIRGINIA held its eleventh annual meeting at Martinsburg; it was very interesting and well attended. The object of holding the meeting in the extreme eastern part of the state was to stimulate the nurses toward better organization. During the convention, the Berkeley County Graduate Nurses' Association was organized with a fair membership. Prior to it, the graduates of the City Hospital had organized an alumnae association. All the meetings were held in the Episcopal Parish House. The Town and Country Nursing Service of the American Red Cross loaned films which were shown through the courtesy of Mr. Irons of the New Apollo Theater. Papers were read on Work in the French Military Hospitals by Nelle Manning of Clarksburg, describing work done in France; Belgian Reminiscences by Louella Ross of Wheeling; In the Russian Prison Camps by Louise Kochert of Wheeling, showing pictures of the people, their customs and the country; also papers and reports by Mrs. Lounsbery, Theresa Flynn, Emma Vernon, Jane Gerner, Nelle Learned, Clara Ross, Dr. Hamill, Hon. P. W. Leiter, Mayor of Martinsburg, Rev. R. L. Wright, Harriet Phalen, Mrs. Susan Cook and Mrs. R. J. Bullard. After a very interesting superintendents' session, the following officers were elected: president, Mrs. Susan Cook; vice presidents, Anna Bessler, Mary A. Gorman; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. R. J. Bullard. Emma Vernon was chosen as president of the Superintendents' Association. Delegates were appointed as follows: to the American Nurses' Association, Louise Kochert; to the State Hospital Association, Mrs. Susan Cook; to the annual meeting of the Red Cross, Nelle Manning; to the State Federation of Women's Clubs, Miss Brantner. The next meeting will be held in Fairmont. Mrs. George Lounsbery was unanimously elected honorary president. Among the entertainments for visitors was a reception by the King's Daughters at the King's Daughters' Hospital and a delightful auto ride through the apple orchards for which that end of the state is famous.